

**BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Special Meeting**  
**May 5, 2016**

Mayor Darrel Olson called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Darrel Olson and Council Members, Steve Barrows and Todd Holman.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Members Quinn Nystrom and Mark Cross.

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele.

Bolton & Menk Consulting Engineer Michael Rardin gave a brief overview of the project. The City originally commissioned Bolton & Menk to conduct a pavement management plan study in 2013 to address ongoing maintenance and funding for the city's streets.

The purpose of the study was to assist the City in developing a plan to preserve and improve quality of City's streets in a fiscally responsible manner considering immediate and long-term needs. Ongoing preventative maintenance would save property owners the higher cost of more frequent reconstruction.

The goal of the pavement management plan is to extend the life of existing pavements and lower future maintenance costs. Using sealcoating as a preventative maintenance costs less compared to a 2-inch mill and overlay or a full-depth reclamation. Cost for sealcoating is \$9.00 per foot for a 36-foot wide street while a 2-inch mill and overlay costs \$70.00 per foot for the same width and full-depth reclamation would be \$253.00 per foot for that same street. Mr. Rardin explained without maintenance, a new road may last 20-30 years but with continuous maintenance the new road may last 40 to 60 years.

Mr. Rardin stated the Pavement Management Plan study recognized franchise fees and assessments as a potential funding source for ongoing maintenance not currently being performed. The council recently adopted franchise fees to assist with funding of routine maintenance including sealcoating and street lighting projects.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience inquired on the cost of the franchise fee. Mayor Olson stated the City has held several meetings regarding franchise fees and the information is available upon request.

Mr. Rardin continued his review of the funding sources for street maintenance and construction which includes:

- Property Tax - crack sealing, snow plowing, pavement markings, shouldering, pothole repair and signs.
- Franchise Fees – for routine pavement management, including sealcoating and street lights.
- Special Assessments – used for mill & overlay, full depth reclamation, street reconstruction and new construction.

- Local Option Sales Tax – only for traffic safety related capital projects, which cannot be used for maintenance.

Mr. Rardin reviewed the project schedule for the 2016 Golf Course Drive project which will be before the council at the May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting when a resolution could be adopted ordering the improvements and preparation of plans and specifications. The schedule includes advertisement for bids in June, bid opening and an assessment hearing with the updated costs in July. The assessment hearing will give residents and business owners another option to speak to the council about the project. If the project goes forward, construction would begin in August and expectations are to have work completed in October.

Project Engineer Bryan Drown discussed the project area which would be from Excelsior Road on the south end of Golf Course Drive to Woida Road. The project would include a mix of total reconstruction and full-depth reclamation, which means the existing pavement, has usefulness and is ground up along with a portion of the aggregate or gravel base for reuse. Spot replacement of curbing is necessary in some areas. The southern end of the project is expected to be more time intensive as it will include a full reclamation with new aggregate and new paving along with work on the storm sewer system where concrete pipe will be installed 4 to 7 feet deep.

The plan is for full-depth reclamation on Golf Course Drive from Excelsior Road by Mills Fleet Farm north to Universal Road. Reconstruction of the street from Universal Road to the Country Club Estates residential development and full-depth reclamation from the Country Club Estates north to Woida Road, where Golf Course Drive now ends. The entire length of Golf Course Drive will be constructed as a 10-ton design.

An unidentified woman from the audience questioned the project boundary at Woida Road. Mr. Drown explained the project location in conjunction with Woida Road.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience questioned what the road will look like when completed. Mr. Drown explained that currently Golf Course Drive is a mix of an urban design with curb and gutter to a more rural road with barely a shoulder. The project would create a single look with curb and gutter throughout, 11-foot driving lanes and 5-foot bicycle lanes on the street.

An unidentified woman from the audience questioned access during construction. Mr. Drown stated that access for residents and commercial interests would be maintained throughout the project with the construction crew relaying information when access may be limited during specific hours. But access for emergency services, ambulance, fire and police, will be maintained throughout.

Mr. Drown explained that project costs are expected to breakdown to \$424,560.00 for the full-depth reclamation, \$453,718.00 for the entire street reconstruction, \$415,044.00 for storm sewer replacement which is city costs and \$75,762.00 for the new storm sewer.

Estimated assessment costs for the full-depth reclamation which were calculated by front footage would be paid entirely by benefiting properties at a cost of \$68.00 per foot. The estimated cost per foot for the full street reconstruction from Universal Road to Country Club Estates would be \$107.00. The new storm sewer for that same stretch would be estimated to be another \$18.00 per foot.

The assessment for the residents of the Country Club Estates, which includes 30 properties in the development, is expected to be \$2,234.96 per lot.

All costs are estimated until bids come in from prospective construction companies. Mayor Olson said while the engineer's estimates are reliable, the final numbers will not be known until the bid process is complete. The project comes with a 12-year assessment term at an estimated 4.75 percent interest.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience questioned the term of the payments, the 70 percent coming from benefiting property owners and 30 percent from the city split and how did the City arrive at this method. Mr. Rardin explained the assessments were calculated by using the front footage method and costs are the same both sides of the street. A hardship application is available for those who qualify. Mayor Olson explained the costs are different for each project. Council Member Holman stated the formula wasn't set it is just how the cost broke down. In larger projects with wetlands and areas that were not assessable, the city has taken a larger percentage of those costs. In this case, it is just the front footage on both sides of the street divided by the project costs that were not city costs.

An unidentified woman from the audience inquired if taxes will go up after the project. Mayor Olson stated no.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience asked for an explanation of the bike trail. Mr. Rardin explained it is not a bike trail, both north and south end has curb and gutter, on each side of the new pavement inside the curb there will be a white stripe for biking or walking.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience inquired on the approaches and how far will you go into each parking or drive approach. Mr. Rardin explained the construction workers would be working between the curb.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience inquired on the plans to connect Cypress Drive and what that may do to future traffic flow. Council Member Holman explained plans are to create a parallel corridor by connecting Cypress Drive and ultimately creating an alternative route east of Highway 371 linking Highland Scenic Road, College Road and going all the way north to Woida Road. The goal is to provide an alternative for local traffic other than Highway 371.

Mayor Olson said demographers previously predicted Baxter would double by 2030 to 16,000. He said the last census had Baxter increasing by 37 percent, which stood out as pretty unusual. The full Cypress Drive parallel corridor may be five to 10 years in the future and much depends on the city's conversations with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and negotiations with BNSF Railway, which wants to limit railroad crossings.

Mayor Olson said the council members had taken the growth predictions seriously, adding that is one of the reasons for the parallel corridor planning so that residents will be able to reach destinations without joining the traffic on Trunk Highway 371. When the former Pine Meadows Golf Course was sold it created an opportunity to talk about that corridor.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience expressed concern on the future of the former golf course, which is now owned by Good Samaritan. Mayor Olson said Good Samaritan has an order of projects, while the Baxter project has a high priority; there are other areas even higher on the priority list right now.

The residents expressed concern about the traffic speed on Golf Course Drive; saying when the new street is done it will be a racetrack. Mayor Olson said the city can set up speed trailer there to remind people. He did note when another residential area requested more patrols and stop signs, the first people cited for speeding were the residents of the area.

An unidentified gentleman from the audience inquired if the city will do anything for a growing gopher population. He said the increased gopher population was a direct result of golf course going out of business as the gophers like mowed areas to feed on grubs. With the golf course no longer maintained and mowed, the gophers have moved to the edge of the mowed areas looking for food.

**MOTION** by Council Member Barrows, seconded by Council Member Holman to close the public hearing at 7:02 p.m. Motion carries unanimously.

**MOTION** by Council Member Barrows, seconded by Council Member Holman to adjourn at 7:03 p.m. Motion carries unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

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Darrel Olson  
Mayor

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Mary Haugen  
Administrative Assistant